

Report to Council

Agenda
Item:

8(b)

Meeting Date: 29th April 2014
Portfolio: Environment and Transport
Key Decision: Not Applicable:
Within Policy and
Budget Framework NO
Public / Private Public

Title: PETITION REQUESTING THE INSTALLATION OF NEW PLAY
EQUIPMENT AT BOTCHERBY
Report of: The Director of Local Environment
Report Number: LE 09/14

Purpose / Summary:

The report responds to the residents' petition requesting the installation of new equipment in the locations where it was removed and assurances that no more children's play areas will be removed from Botcherby.

Recommendations:

That the Council invites representatives of the Botcherby community to meet with officers and the Portfolio Holder to explore the options available to them for future development of play areas in Botcherby Ward, without prejudice as to any possible outcome.

Tracking

Executive:	
Overview and Scrutiny:	
Council:	

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1** After a thorough review of all 69 play areas in its control, Carlisle City Council has drawn up a schedule of strategically important sites to receive continued investment and development. These are the sites that provide the most exciting play opportunities for the greatest number of children. At a time of limited resources it is logical to apply them to achieve the greatest benefit.
- 1.2** The review was implemented in February and March 2014. Two out of five play areas in the Botcherby Ward had the fixed play equipment removed and were left as informal open space; Broadoaks Grange and Scotby Gardens
- 1.3** The review highlighted three play areas within the Botcherby Ward that are strategically important sites which will receive continued investment and development; Keenan Park, Melbourne Park – Metal Box and Eden Park Crescent. In addition there is another play area immediately on the ward boundary (Scotby Road) that serves residents of Botcherby Ward which will receive continued investment and development
- 1.4** In April 2014 a petition was received requesting that new equipment should be installed in the play areas and assurances sought that no more fixed play equipment was to be removed from Botcherby Ward.
- 1.5** There are opportunities for S106 funding to support sports and play provision in Botcherby. It is important that community views are sought on how the funding is spent if and when it becomes available.
- 1.6** The review recommends that any future improvements to play areas are focused on the strategically important sites that provide the most exciting play opportunities for the greatest number of children

2 PROPOSALS

- 2.1** In the light of the petition, it is reasonable to meet with petitioners and to seek a mutually acceptable solution. Accordingly a meeting will be arranged to include the Director of Local Environment and the Portfolio Holder (Cllr Martlew). The meeting will be held in an open and transparent manner and without prejudice to the prior recommendations of the Director in relation to the play areas in Botcherby Ward.

- 2.2** The Botcherby Community is consulted in how to invest any funds if and when they become available through S106 or other funding in the strategically important sites. This will ensure that it will have the greatest impact and can be maintained sustainably within the current resources

3 CONSULTATION

- 3.1** The Play Area Review was first taken to the Council's Executive who referred it, without comment, to Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Panel. Overview & Scrutiny comments were then fed back to the Executive.

4 CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1** The Play Area Review is a sound piece of work that attempts to identify those facilities that represent the best value for money for Council Tax payers at a time when resources are not available to continue with current maintenance regimes.
- 4.2** The City Council acknowledges the importance of consultation with residents on the future development of the play areas within their own communities and welcomes the interest of the Botcherby community. It is with this spirit of mutual assistance that we look forward to meeting with representatives of the community to explore all options for the future management of the play areas.

5 CONTRIBUTION TO THE CARLISLE PLAN PRIORITIES

- 5.1 AIM: Working effectively through partnerships to achieve the City Council priorities**
- 5.2 ACTION: Develop a partnership approach to add value and animate parks and open spaces**

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**Appendices
attached to report:**

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

- **None**

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS/RISKS:

Chief Executive's -

Deputy Chief Executive –

Economic Development –

Governance – The Local Government Act 2000 (Section 2) provides that the Council has the power to do anything which it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the social or environmental well-being of its area. The power may be used in relation or for the benefit of the whole or any part of the community or all or any persons present or resident in the Council's area. The Council is able to enter into agreements or arrangements with any person acting on behalf of a community group. In exercising the power, the Council must have regard to its Community Strategy.

Local Environment –

Resources – Any financial implications, including the appropriate use of S106 monies, must be considered as part of any discussions with residents; this not only includes any on-going maintenance liabilities but also potential responsibilities in respect of insurance cover and associated premium payments and claim liabilities.